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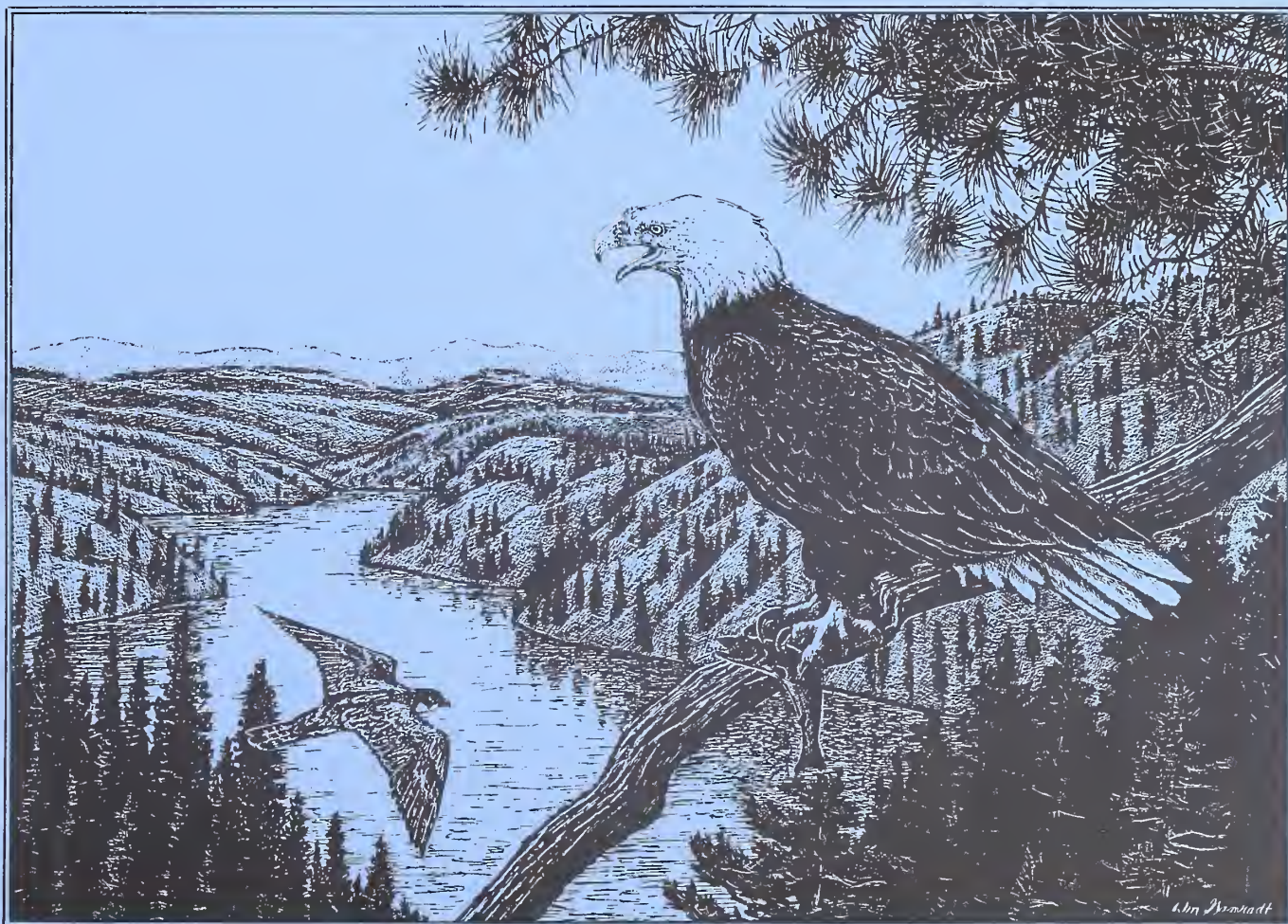
Region One

Idaho Panhandle
National Forests

Clearwater
National Forest

Nez Perce
National Forest

North Idaho Bald Eagle & Peregrine Falcon Management Program



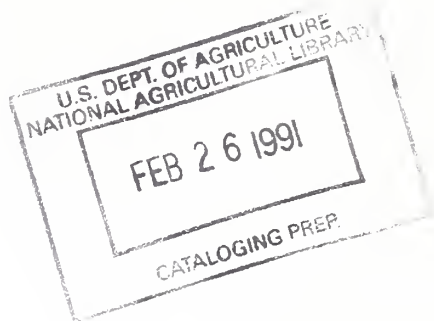
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**North Idaho National Forest
Bald Eagle and Peregrine Falcon
Management Program**

1989

The **Bald Eagle** and the **Peregrine Falcon** are both endangered species inhabiting national forests of North Idaho. Recovery of threatened and endangered species on National Forest lands is an important land management objective. National Forests in North Idaho have made a commitment to work within our organization and cooperatively with the other involved agencies to recover these important and beautiful birds.

Bill Morden Date 5/2/89
Bill Morden - Forest Supervisor Idaho Panhandle National Forests

Fred Trevy Date 4/27/89
Fred Trevy - Forest Supervisor Clearwater National Forest

Tom Kovalicky Date 4-21-89
Tom Kovalicky - Forest Supervisor Nez Perce National Forest

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The development of this North Idaho National Forest Bald Eagle and Peregrine Falcon Management Program is the result of participation of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service with the Idaho Panhandle, Clearwater, and Nez Perce National Forests.

I. Introduction

This report has been prepared to:

- a. **Identify the Forest Service's role** in the North Idaho Bald Eagle and Peregrine Falcon recovery efforts;
- b. **Identify the tasks necessary** to accomplish the Forest Service's portion of the recovery effort;
- c. **Develop the costs** of the proposed tasks;
- d. **Set priorities** for the identified tasks;
- e. **Provide for an interagency approach** to bald eagle and peregrine falcon recovery on National Forest lands in North Idaho.

II. Bald Eagles and Peregrine Falcons in North Idaho

The **Bald Eagle** our national symbol and the **Peregrine Falcon** are magnificent birds which generate high public interest. Also, both birds are listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as "**endangered**" under the **Endangered Species Act of 1973**. Populations of these species plummeted in the contiguous 48 states as a result of pesticide use and its side-effects on reproduction of bald eagles and peregrines. Since DDT was banned in 1972, populations have increased, and in some areas bald eagles are being considered for a down-listing to "threatened".

Northern Idaho, including the Idaho Panhandle, the Clearwater and the Nez Perce National Forests, has historic use by bald eagles and peregrines. Wintering and resident bald eagle populations are increasing. There are recent sightings of peregrines in North Idaho.

National Forests of North Idaho provide important habitat for these endangered species. Based on the Endangered Species Act, the Forest Service has a shared responsibility for the recovery of bald eagles and peregrines. Some of the responsibilities National Forests have to threatened and endangered species include:

1. To provide habitat and ensure our activities compliment recovery of the species.
2. To cooperate with state and other federal agencies in recovery efforts.
3. To involve the public in our recovery programs, including providing information about the species, their habitat and population status, and what factors lead to the species being listed as threatened or endangered.

Idaho Department of Fish and Game, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management and Indian tribes are other agencies with responsibilities for recovering the bald eagle and peregrine falcon. Recovery programs for the bald eagle and peregrine falcon are high visibility that enjoy public support.

III. Forest Service Direction

The mandate for the Forest Service to recover threatened and endangered species comes from the Endangered Species Act, National Forest Management Act, Resource Policy Act, and Multiple Use Sustained Yield Act.

Forest Service direction states that the **"Forest Service shall encourage or initiate the reintroduction of listed wildlife, fish and plants onto suitable unoccupied habitat when such actions promote recovery of the species."** and **"conduct activities and programs to 'assist in the identification and recovery of threatened and endangered plant and animal species.'"**(FSM - 2674, 2670.12)

IV. Forest Plan Direction

The Forest Plans of the Idaho Panhandle NF, the Clearwater NF and the Nez Perce NF include direction for the bald eagle and the peregrine falcon. A Memorandum of Understanding between the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) and Region 1 of the Forest Service (5/83) states that IDFG is **"the agency responsible for managing fish and wildlife,"** and further states that IDFG and the Forest Service **"will jointly cooperate in the monitoring of management indicator species, as listed in Forest Plans."** All North Idaho Forests have identified the bald eagle and the peregrine falcon as "indicator species". The goal for the Forest Service regarding these species is to manage habitat to contribute to the conservation and recovery of these species.

The **IPNF** Plan calls for:

- protection of bald eagle habitat
- bald eagle nest management planning
- cooperation in research and surveys

- habitat surveys for peregrine reintroduction sites
- reporting peregrine sightings
- cooperation in research and data collection concerning the falcon.
- public awareness and education about T&E species management

Bald Eagles are identified in the **Clearwater National Forest** Plan as using the Forest, however no nesting or roosting sites are presently known.

The **Nez Perce National Forest** Plan identifies the bald eagle and the peregrine as indicator species. The Plan identifies 43,977 acres of occupied bald eagle habitat located along the Forest's larger rivers. Peregrine falcons were formerly found on the Forest although no active nesting sites or peregrine sightings have been reported. The Plan states that 102,000 acres of peregrine habitat exists on the Forest. A peregrine falcon reintroduction program has been ongoing on the Nez Perce since 1986.

V. Public Interest

Bald eagles and peregrine falcons are birds of prey with a high levels of public interest and concern. Recovery programs for both species are viewed as a positive aspect of a Forest's overall natural resource program. Observing bald eagles along North Idaho's large lakes and rivers is a recreational pastime for many photographers, birdwatchers, and the general public. All agencies are cooperating to ensure a speedy recovery of the bald eagle and the peregrine falcon in North Idaho.

VI. Bald Eagle Status in North Idaho

Bald eagles are visitors and year long residents of North Idaho. They are attracted to the area's large lakes and rivers and associated food supplies. Bald eagles are on the increase as indicated by both seasonal counts during winter and increases in nesting birds. Habitat for bald eagles is directly related to the large lakes such as Lake Pend Oreille and the large river systems like the Clark Fork, Kootenai, Coeur d'Alene, Clearwater, and Snake. These waters are adjacent to or flow through National Forest lands which provide much of the roosting, perching and nesting habitat for these birds.

A. Wintering Populations

Bald eagles generally migrate south from their northerly summer habitat to winter on Lake Pend Oreille and other waters of North Idaho. Reasons for this migration are associated with weather and the availability of suitable habitat and food. Mid-winter bald eagle censuses, beginning in 1979, on Lake Pend Oreille, conducted by Idaho Fish and Game (IDFG) in conjunction with the National Wildlife Federation indicated a January count of near 100 eagles.

In 1985, a two year wintering bald eagle study was begun on Lake Pend Oreille. Bald eagle numbers peak during December or January. In 1985/86, 274 eagles were counted; in 1986/87 the peak count was 429; and in the 1987/88 winter, 288 bald eagles were observed during December. Bald eagles are attracted to Lake Pend Oreille because of the open water and the abundant kokanee salmon food source. A cooperative census between the Forest Service and IDFG was initiated in 1987/88 to continue monitoring bald eagle numbers and habitat use. Bald eagle use at Lake Pend Oreille represents approximately 4% of the bald eagles counted nationwide and up to 60% of the mid-winter Idaho population.

Other winter counts indicate increasing eagle numbers in North Idaho. Coeur d'Alene Lake and the Clearwater River are wintering habitat for numerous bald eagles.

B. Resident Populations

Bald eagle nesting surveys in Idaho indicate increasing trends. In 1985 there were 14 known occupied bald eagle nests in Idaho, today there are 45. North Idaho is experiencing a similar increase. Lake Pend Oreille, for example, had one eagle nest in 1978, two in 1982 and six active nests and a high probability of a seventh in 1988. Three other nests are located in Boundary County of North Idaho. Six active nests near Lake Pend Oreille produced six eaglets in 1988, with only one nest failing. None of the Lake Pend Oreille nests are presently located on National Forest lands although several are close.

Of the 45 occupied territories in Idaho, 13 are located in North Idaho. Presently, one of these nests is located on National Forest lands with twelve on other lands. As populations increase, National Forest lands will undoubtedly be used for nesting sites.

VII. Peregrine Falcon Status in North Idaho

The peregrine falcon is native throughout the entire United States. Population densities of these falcons have historically been low. The peregrine was listed as "endangered" in 1970 after DDT use nearly exterminated the peregrines in the United States.

North Idaho had historical peregrine nest sites or eyries. An eyrie was known to exist along the lower Clark Fork River in Idaho in the 1960s. This site was believed to be one of the last known peregrine eyries in Idaho.

Peregrine falcons have been successfully reintroduced into many areas of its former range by a process known as hacking. This process has been used by falconers for centuries to raise young falcons on towers on suitable cliff sites. Hacking has been adopted and adapted to reintroduce peregrines into the wild. Young birds are fed in hack boxes, situated on towers and cliffs, where they develop and learn to fly and hunt. Many birds may be released from a single hack site. The goal of the project is that young birds will again occupy historical habitat.

A. Forest Service Program

The Forest Service has sponsored four of five hack sites in Montana and the only one in North Idaho. Forest Service involvement with peregrine falcon reintroductions goes back to 1986 on the Nez Perce National Forest. Hack sites were funded in 1986 and 1987 and are planned to be continued until 1992. Plans for another hack site are presently underway. The goal is to establish a wild peregrine falcon nesting territory. Returning peregrine falcons were observed for the first time in 1988.

A peregrine falcon habitat evaluation and survey was conducted on the Sandpoint Ranger District of the IPNF in 1987. The survey identified several potential hack sites in the Lake Pend Oreille vicinity and helped in assigning hack site priorities for statewide peregrine reintroduction plans. Idaho Fish and Game and USFWS plans indicate North Idaho is a priority region for peregrine reintroductions and support future reintroductions. Other potential reintroduction sites on the IPNF include Hall Mountain north of Bonner's Ferry, Roman Nose Mountain in the Selkirk Mountains, and along the lower Coeur d'Alene River.

B. Reintroduction Planning

The process of hacking requires coordinated planning. Planning includes a commitment to substantial funds over a period of five years or more. The availability of birds is another important consideration, as is planning for permits, hack site attendants, habitat inventories, public involvement, and selection of hacking sites. This program must be a cooperative effort between the USFS, IDFG, USFWS and private organizations like the Peregrine Fund.

VIII. North Idaho Bald Eagle/Peregrine Falcon Meeting

On June 22, 1988, a meeting was conducted at the Clearwater National Forest's Supervisor's Office to coordinate peregrine falcon and bald eagle management programs on the three northern Idaho national forests.

The following people attended:

Bill Ruediger - USFS- Regional T&E Program Coordinator
 Rich Howard - US Fish and Wildlife Service
 Wayne Melquist - Idaho Fish and Game - Nongame Program Manager
 Paul Harrington - Idaho Panhandle NF
 Steve Blair - Nez Perce NF
 Dan Davis - Clearwater NF
 Dave Thorson - Sandpoint Ranger District IPNF

A. Objectives of Meeting

1. To share management information concerning the bald eagle and peregrine falcon among involved state and federal agencies.
2. To outline specific tasks and responsibilities to facilitate bald eagle and peregrine falcon recovery.
3. To establish priorities, costs, and personnel needed to achieve Forest Service goals concerning the recovery of these two species.
4. To coordinate methodologies, reporting forms, and other information or data collected.

B. Task Identification

Participants at the North Idaho Bald Eagle and Peregrine Falcon Inter-agency Meeting have identified the following tasks to be accomplished by the three North Idaho national forests:

1. Bald Eagle Tasks:

1. Annually survey bald eagle habitat for new nesting sites on national forest lands and cooperate with involved agencies for new nest sites on adjacent lands.
2. Conduct winter censuses to determine trends in winter use by eagles in North Idaho. Such surveys may include identification of roosting, perching, and feeding areas and would be cooperative in nature with other involved agencies.
3. Nest site productivity surveys. Surveys would determine occupancy and productivity of known nests and territories. Bald eagle production is strongly related to habitat quality, disturbances and food availability. Surveys will be cooperative in nature if nests are not located on national forest lands.
4. Nesting habitat management plans will be completed for all territories on National Forest lands. Additional planning funds for these plans will be requested as new nests are located.
5. Mapping potential bald eagle habitat to identify roosting, perching, feeding and nesting areas.
6. Implement a cooperative bald eagle study on the lower Clearwater River by the Clearwater National Forest.

2. Peregrine Falcon Tasks:

1. Establish hack sites on the IPNF and Nezperce which have been approved for reintroduction of the peregrine falcon. The Nez Perce has had hack sites for two years and will continue until peregrine falcons occupy available habitat. An additional hack site is presently being planned. The Sandpoint Ranger District of the IPNF has completed a peregrine habitat study and has identified several potential hack sites. Other potential hack sites exist on Hall Mountain, Roman Nose Mountain, and the Lower Coeur d'Alene River.
2. Initiate a peregrine habitat survey and develop reintroduction plans if suitable habitat is found. (IPNF and Clearwater NF)
3. Develop and implement a cooperative public awareness, involvement, and educational program for the peregrine (as well as the bald eagle) for North Idaho (IPNF, Clearwater and Nezperce).
4. A long range strategy for peregrine reintroduction to North Idaho will be developed.
5. Implement a monitoring program to determine success of the hacking program.

Attached are tables identifying projects, costs, and priorities for funding and completion.

Summary

Participants at a North Idaho Bald Eagle/Peregrine Falcon Meeting developed this outline to guide the bald eagle and peregrine falcon program for North Idaho. It is a cooperative program with other agencies such as Idaho Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Both the peregrine falcon and the bald eagle enjoy public interest and support and would be viewed as a positive program. The Forest Service's role is to share the initiative to develop such a program for North Idaho for the benefit of the bald eagle, the peregrine falcon and the Nation's public who enjoy these beautiful and important birds.

**North Idaho National Forest
Bald Eagle Program Costs**

Task	Estimated Cost Per Forest	Forest	Priority
Annual Nesting Survey	\$2,500	IPNF	1
Winter Roost, Habitat Use and Census	\$3,000	IPNF CLW NEZ	2
Nest Productivity	\$3,000	IPNF	3
Nest Management Plans	\$5,000 to \$10,000 as found		1
Mapping Potential Habitat	\$3,000	IPNF	4

**Bald Eagle
Proposed 5 Year Program
North Idaho National Forests
(Yearly Costs in Thousands)**

YEAR

Forest	1	2	3	4	5
Idaho Panhandle NF	\$8.5	\$11.5	\$8.5	\$8.5	\$8.5
Clearwater NF	\$3	\$6	\$3	\$3	\$3
Nez Perce NF	\$3	\$3	\$3	\$3	\$3
Totals	\$14.5	\$20.5	\$14.5	\$14.5	\$14.5

**North Idaho National Forest
Peregrine Falcon Program Costs**

Task	Estimated Cost Per Forest	Forest	Priority
Peregrine Falcon Reintroductions (Hack Site Funding and NEPA)	\$15,000/site	Nez IPNF Nez	1a 1b 1c
Peregrine Habitat Surveys and District Plans	\$5,000/Dist.	IPNF CLW	2
Public Involvement, Awareness and Education	\$10,000/Forest	IPNF Nez	3
Peregrine Management Strategy	\$10,000 for coop plan		4
Project Monitoring	\$10,000/Forest per year		5

**Peregrine Falcon
Proposed 5 Year Program
North Idaho National Forests
(Yearly Costs in Thousands)**

Year Forest	1	2	3	4	5
Idaho Panhandle NF	\$27	\$35	\$35	\$35	\$35
Clearwater NF	\$5	\$5	\$7	\$5	\$15
Nez Perce NF	\$40	\$40	\$50	\$50	\$50
Totals	\$72	\$80	\$92	\$92	\$92

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